

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Legal Organ of Union County

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Mock Trial team earns high honors at State

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

March 15 is a day to remember for the five-time Region Champion Union County High School Mock Trial Team.

Union's Mock Trial Team finished as one of the top eight teams in the State Finals at the Gwinnett Justice Center in Lawrenceville.

At the State Competition, senior Alice Francis and sophomore Kat Capstick picked up two Outstanding Awards, while sophomore Sage Royston and senior Corey Harris each received an Outstanding Award.

"At the end of the day, our team did an amazing job, and those students were recognized for their outstanding performances in the courtroom," Union County Mock Trial Teacher-Coach Amy Payne said.

By the nature of the final rounds at the Mock Trial State



Pictured left to right, Kat Capstick, Raven Heyer, Corey Harris, Alice Francis, Rachel Todd, Abhyjit Kheepal, and Brooke Hamby with the awards they earned during the state Mock Trial Competition at the Gwinnett Justice Center in Lawrenceville.

Competition, only the final placement of two of the eight

teams is known: the runner-up Lowndes County and the

champion Jonesboro. Alice Francis put it best,

weight, and invested heart and soul into practice."

The Mock Trial squad made history Feb. 22, in Cartersville, adding the title of District Champion to their list of accomplishments and earned a trip to the State Finals in March.

The team punched its ticket to State at the Bartow County Courthouse as one of the top six teams from Regions 5 and 6 who had advanced from February's Regional Competition.

This is the first year the District round of Mock Trial Competition has been implemented by the State Bar of Georgia.

In two rounds of the District match-up for the prosecution and defense teams, the UCHS team won an incredible four-of-four courtrooms completed in, as well as 11 of 12 evaluator ballots.

Students competing

See *Mock Trial*, 3A

Airport Day to become annual event

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

A cool wind and rain didn't deter the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Union from holding its first ever Airport Awareness Day at the Blairsville Municipal Airport on Saturday.

According to Leadership Union's Janice Taylor, about 70 people attended the event created to raise awareness of the current and proposed facilities at the Blairsville Municipal Airport to surrounding residents of surrounding counties, and airports within a 150-mile radius.

"Through the (guest speakers) we are trying to increase the awareness of what's going on at the airport," Taylor said. "A lot of people don't know about the industrial park."

See *Airport*, 3A



Blairsville Municipal Airport was the place to be on Saturday as Leadership Union hosted Airport Awareness Day. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Busbee wins State Championship at SkillsUSA Competition in Atlanta

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Atlanta - Union County has another state champion.

Courtney Busbee, a junior at Union County High School, is headed to Kansas City, MO. where she'll be competing for the SkillsUSA National Championship in June.

Busbee recently competed in both the regional and state SkillsUSA competitions and came back a second place finisher in the Region competition before stepping up her game and claiming the State Championship in First Aid/CPR.

Amazingly, this is Busbee's first year of competition in the SkillsUSA organization.

See *Championship*, 2A



UCHS' Sandra Cook, and State Champion Courtney Busbee celebrate a state championship in Atlanta at SkillsUSA state competition.

Patriots Day just around the corner

By Charles Duncan
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If you hear musket fire on April 19th, don't be alarmed.

It's the day set aside to remember the patriots who set our nation on a course of freedom.

Union County Sole Commissioner has declared April 19 as Patriots Day in Union County.

Patriots Day is a tradition in Union County.

David Cook, of the Blue Ridge Mountains Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution said that Patriots Day is the day to remember the rides of Paul Revere, William Dawes, and Dr. Samuel Prescott as they raced through



David Cook

the Massachusetts countryside to warn fellow citizens that British troops were coming.

Those rides took place April 19, 1775.

Cook invites locals to the Historic Union County

Courthouse to examine artifacts and exhibits from the era.

"We might even fire off a musket or two," Cook said.

Paris said it is important to remember Patriots Day.

"It is appropriate that we recognize the importance of this date in our history," Paris said. "We must always remember the sacrifices endured by the many Patriots of our nation during the many years of struggle for the American Independence.

"Our forefathers before us paid heed to the warnings of April 19, 1775," Paris said. "They took up arms, congregated on the Village Green in Lexington, and during a con-

See *Patriots*, 2A

Farmers Market expansion a reality

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

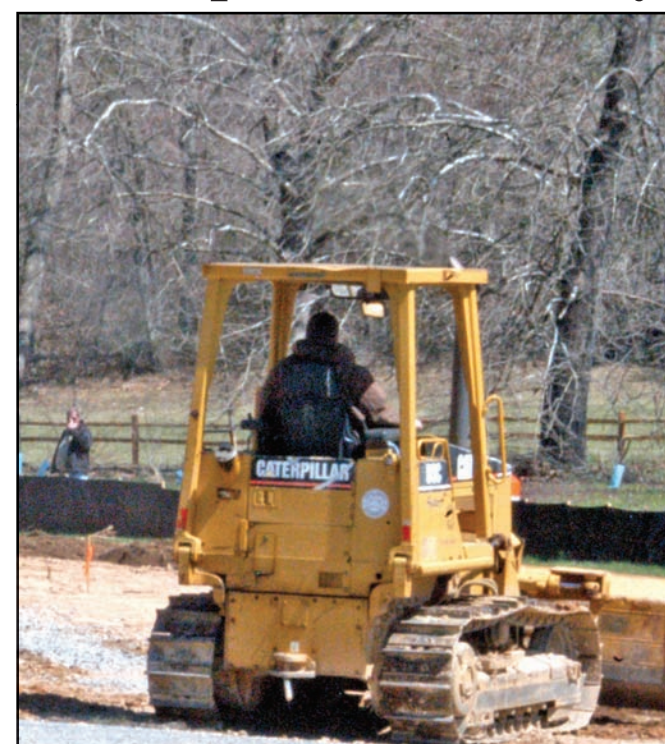
Spring is in the air and soon the Union County Farmers Market will be buzzing with activity.

As the calendar flips to April, the first weekend of June grand opening is just two months away, and the county is hard at work, doing its best to allow more vendors and shoppers to take part in the local phenomenon thanks to two Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax-funded upgrades.

Two bridges are near completion that will create a significant increase in parking space, and eventually car shows and other events, but for now, the added parking will allow the market to become more accessible to the public.

The land to be used

See *Market*, 2A



Construction to add more vendor space at the Union County Farmers Market is underway. Photo/Todd Forrest

Locals share stories from World War II

By Mason Mitcham
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Hiwassee - For someone with Irish blood on both sides of her family, Carol Gibson comes off as mild-mannered and pleasant.

She's also quietly determined to give voice to the veterans who still have stories to tell.

On Thursday and Friday, the *Witness to War Foundation*, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the stories and unique experiences of combat veterans, visited Towns County.

"They want the stories that you don't read in textbooks," Gibson said.



Bud Johnson

The foundation interviewed not only Bud Johnson, Phil Gamache and Todd Kimsey, local Iwo Jima survivors, but WWII survivors from all

over the area, from Towns to Cherokee.

This would not have been possible without Gibson, whose efforts started the whole thing with the support of Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall.

It started unremarkably enough for Gibson. She and her husband were watching a show around New Year's that featured a piece on World War II veterans being turned away at the WWII memorial in Washington, D.C.

"That 'got my Irish up,' as my mother used to say," Gibson said, smiling. "The show that we watched had

See *WWII*, 3A

Blairsville woman, 49, dies in White County crash

Judge Gunter, his wife, not injured in two-vehicle crash in Union

By Charles Duncan
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A 49-year-old Blairsville woman died in an early morning crash on Friday in White County.

Paula Jean Densmore of Blairsville was pronounced dead at the scene of the crash on U.S. 129, just south of Cleveland, according to the Georgia State Patrol.

According to GSP, Densmore was driving

southbound on U.S. 129 near Westmoreland Road south of Cleveland when she crossed the center line and hit another vehicle head-on.

Jose Jimenez, 33, from Cornelia, the driver of the other vehicle, was taken to a local hospital for medical treatment. His medical condition was unknown at press time.

In an unrelated accident, Enotah Judicial Circuit Superior Court Judge Stan Gunter was involved in a two-vehicle accident that happened just

before 5 p.m. on Sunday on Georgia 11, according to GSP.

"It was a two-vehicle crash (Sunday) around 4:40 p.m. on Georgia 11 in Union County," GSP spokesman Gordy Wright said. "A 2009 Yamaha operated by Rogelio Vargas Miranda, age 28, from Atlanta, was traveling south on Georgia 11 and attempting to negotiate a curve to the right."

See *Crashes*, 3A

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First Classic Car Event of Spring 2014
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UNION COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS
BASEBALL:
Tuesday April 1st @ Rabun County 5 PM
Friday April 4th vs. Social Circle 5 PM
DOUBLEHEADER